

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
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FM AMCONSUL STUTTGART

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4570

AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE

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USCINCEUR AND USAREUR FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: CONTROVERSY IN SPD RANKS

1. AFTER THE CONTROVERSY WHICH WRACKED THE BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG  
CDU BECAUSE OF THE FILBINGER AFFAIR, IT IS NOW THE SPD'S TURN TO  
MAKE A FEW SMALL HEADLINES IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG. WHAT TOUCHED IT  
OFF WAS AN INTERVIEW BY SPD LAND CHAIRMAN EPPLER WITH THE  
NATIONAL MEWSMAGAZINE "DER SPIEGEL" EARLIER THIS MONTH IN WHICH  
EPPLER COMMENTED ON THE "GREEN" PARTIES. HE SAID THE "GREENS"  
COULD ONLY ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS WITH THE SPD; THE FDP, WITH ITS  
PRESENT NATIONAL LEADERSHIP, SEEMED TO HAVE LITTLE TO OFFER.  
HE DID NOT EXCLUDE THAT THE GREEN PARTIES MIGHT SOME DAY BE A

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POSSIBLE COALITION PARTNER FOR THE SPD. ALSO IN A BOOK HE  
WROTE THAT WAS PUBLISHED THIS MONTH, EPPLER CLAIMS THAT IN JULY  
1974 HE HAD FELT OBLIGED TO LEAVE THE CABINET OF HELMUT SCHMIDT  
(EPPLER WAS FEDERAL MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT AID), SINCE  
REMAINING IN THE CABINET WOULD HAVE RUINED HIM NOT ONLY POLITICALLY  
BUT MAYBE ALSO "PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY" BECAUSE THE DECISION  
EITHER TO GIVE UP HIS IDENTITY OR TO RESIGN WOULD HAVE

CONSTANTLY BEEN AT ISSUE.

2. PEGGING HIS REMARKS ON EPPLER'S SPIEGEL INTERVIEW, RAINER OFFERGELD, FEDERAL MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND MEMBER OF THE BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG SPD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, CRITICIZED EPPLER IN AN INTERVIEW ON AUGUST 23 IN THE STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG. IN OFFERGELD'S OPINION THE GREEN PARTIES WERE SUCH A HETEROGENEOUS COLLECTION OF INTERESTS THAT THEY COULD NEVER BECOME A COALITION PARTNER FOR THE SPD, THOUGH OFFERGELD ADMITTED THAT SERIOUS GROUPS COMMITTED TO ECOLOGICAL ISSUES WOULD BE WORTHWHILE FOR THE SPD TO ATTRACT. WITH REFERENCE TO EPPLER'S CRITICISM OF CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, OFFERGELD SAID IT WAS CAUSING MUCH STRAIN WITHIN THE PARTY SINCE IT WAS BELIEVED TO STEM FROM THE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO MEN. (THEIR RELATIONS ARE KNOWN TO BE NOT GOOD). AS FOR THE SPD'S CHANCES IN THE 1980 LANDTAG ELECTIONS OFFERGELD EMPHASIZED THAT IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG THE SPD MUST MAKE MORE INTENSIVE EFFORT TO WIND OVER THE VOTERS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND TO MAKE ITS PROGRAM MORE UNDERSTANDABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

3. OFFERGELD'S OPEN CRITICISM OF EPPLER HAS HAD REPERCUSSIONS WITHIN THE SPD ORGANIZATION IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG. THE PRESS REPORTS THAT DEPUTY LAND CHAIRMAN STEINKUEHLER HAS REBUTTED OFFERGELD BY SAYING THAT WHILE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PARTY'S FUTURE WAS NECESSARY, THIS SHOULD BE DONE WITHIN THE PARTY AND WITH THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IF PROFESSIONS OF SOLIDARITY WERE TO BE MORE

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THAN JUST LIP-SERVICE. WERNER WEINMANN, DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE SPD LANDTAG FACTION, IS ALSO REPORTED AS DISMISSING OFFERGELD'S CRITICISM AS THEORETICAL AND WITHOUT FOUNDATION. IN WEINMANN'S OPINION, OFFERGELD IS NOW SO OCCUPIED IN BONN THAT HE HAS LOST TOUCH WITH THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS ON THE POLITICAL SCENE IN HIS NATIVE LAND. PRESS STORIES DO GO ON TO REPORT, HOWEVER, THAT A NUMBER OF SPD MEMBERS IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG ARE OF THE OPINION THAT ONLY IF VOLKER HAUFF, 39 YEAR OLD FEDERAL MINISTER FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY, REPLACES EPPLER AS SPD LAND CHAIRMAN WOULD THE SPD HAVE A CHANCE OF BREAKING THE CDU'S ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN THE 1980 LANDTAG ELECTIONS. (IN 1976 THE CDU POLLED 56.7 PERCENT OF THE VOTES AND THE SPD 33.3 PERCENT.) THAT HAUFF IS ANXIOUS TO SUCCEED EPPLER AS LAND CHAIRMAN AFTER 1980 IS AN OPEN SECRET. COMMENT: EPPLER

IS REPEATED IN THE LAND SPD FOR HIS INTELLIGENCE BUT HE LACKS CHARISMA AND UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP THE PARTY HAS NOT DONE WELL. RECENT CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE HAD WITH WEINMANN AND OTHER SPD FIGURES CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PRESS STORIES OF GROWING DISENCHANTMENT WITHIN THE BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG SPD OVER EPPLER'S LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER, WHILE EPPLER'S REPLACEMENT BY HAUFF WOULD BE WELCOMED, WE SEE NO EVIDENCE AS OF THIS TIME THAT A "DUMP EPPLER" CAMPAIGN IS LIKELY TO BE MOUNTED WITHIN THE

BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG SPD. IN FACT, THE SPD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MET ON AUG. 28 AND INFORMED THE PRESS THAT IT HAD VOTED A MOTION OF CONFIDENCE IN EPPLER AND IN THE PARTY PROGRAM ELABORATED UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP.

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## Message Attributes

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